

# RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

Department	Communities and Families	Unit/Section	Schools and Lifelong Learning
Date of Guidance and Risk Assessment	Updated 19/07/18 <b>Version 2</b>	Assessor(s)	Andrew Bradshaw, Fraser Robertson, Cliff Smith (Outdoor Learning Team) and Neil Birch (FOTA). Enquiries via <a href="mailto:excursions@edinburgh.gov.uk">excursions@edinburgh.gov.uk</a>
What is the activity?	Excursion/Expedition: water used for drinking, cooking and washing.	Where is the activity carried out?	Various outdoor locations used for excursions/expeditions.

## Key Information

The risk assessment must be used as the Council's **minimum requirement** by ALL excursion/expedition participants (young people and adults) in planning and delivering **adequate** and **safe** water provision for drinking, cooking and washing.

### Key points:

- The risk assessment has been created by highly experienced outdoor learning instructors and utilises the latest advice from the NHS, Duke of Edinburgh's Award and other key sources.
- The risk assessment provides the **minimum requirement**. Additional actions, responsibilities and deadlines **must** be added by the Group Leader and/or another competent person to reflect individual excursions/expeditions to **complete** this risk assessment.
- Participants **must** take an active part in helping to complete the risk assessment.
- The risk assessment **must** be submitted with EX forms (new forms from June 1 2018).
- The **findings** of the **completed** risk assessment **must** be **shared** with **ALL** participants.
- Water provision **must** be carefully planned and **ALL** participants involved in this process.
- As part of the approval process, the Outdoor Learning Team will review the quality of planning and actions for safe water provision.
- **Treated clean water i.e. tap water and bottled water must be used wherever and whenever reasonably practicable.** This can be achieved by **careful** and **thorough** planning, **competent** leaders and the involvement of **all** participants.
- The use of untreated water and **approved** purification methods (see below) **must only** be considered in the **most remote** areas and where these conditions apply:
  - (i) **No** access to treated clean water;
  - (ii) transporting sufficient water within the group is **significantly impractical**;
  - (iii) dropping water off is **significantly impractical**;
  - (iv) water is collected from a **fast-flowing** stream/source;

- (v) **AVOID** stagnant, standing or 'sluggish' water sources;
- (vi) **AVOID** water sources polluted from human waste (toileting or washing) and can include waste from boating; and
- (vii) **AVOID** water sources draining from farmland (arable and non-arable), forestry, settlements, heavy industry and intensively used wildlife habitats, and **ensure** the water source is as clean as possible by inspecting upstream for **100 metres** to identify any potential hazards.

This must be **carefully** and **thoroughly** planned by **competent** leaders and the actions in this risk assessment are followed as a **minimum requirement**. Group leaders and/or another competent person **must add** any additional actions and information to this risk assessment to reflect each individual excursion/expedition.

- When it is not possible to use treated clean water, untreated water in the **most remote areas** (see above) **will** be made safe by **boiling or chemical methods**. Only use **approved method/s**:
  - (i) Water boiling. Rolling boil for 1 minute would normally be **sufficient** in **most** situations. Water should be boiled for 3 minutes at altitudes above 2000 m (6562 ft) where water boils at a lower temperature.
  - (ii) Chlorine dioxide - available in tablet or droplet form and is cheap, safe and effective. Chlorine dioxide will kill bacteria, viruses and cysts in water (including *giardia* and *cryptosporidium*). Follow directions in the pack for effective use.
  - (iii) Filtration plus (i) or (ii). Filter must be maintained as per manufacturer's guidance and used as per the recommendations.
  - (iv) Chemical filtration. Must be used as per instructions and filters replaced within manufacturers' guidance.

FOR (iii) and (iv), appropriate equipment must be purchased from **established specialist outdoor/adventure suppliers** and not unbranded/cheap alternatives from 'general' suppliers e.g. general online stores. It is recommended to consult with the Sports and Outdoor Learning Unit on advice about suitable manufactures and products.

- The **recommended minimum** clean water required for a full day of moderate exercise is 2 litres per person per day. More water will be required depending on a range of variables including the needs of all participants, nature of the activities, weather, terrain and mode of travel e.g. more water is required on a hot day.

### Key definitions:

A **competent Group Leader** or **other competent person** approved to use untreated water and approved purification methods:

has attended Group Leader training in the last 3 years, experience of water purification (recorded in risk assessment and EE1) and/or attended training which has included water purification within the course (recorded in risk assessment and EE1). **CEC will be developing a new short training session for water purification**. This is due by Spring 2019.

A **competent participant** e.g. young person in using untreated water and approved purification methods:

has undertaken appropriate training by the Group Leader or other competent person **prior** to the excursion and has been **assessed as being competent** i.e. can use the appropriate method with minimal risk of cross contamination or incorrect use. Appropriate training is defined as **regular** (at least 3) sessions in using the equipment, including understanding the manufacturer's guidance/instructions,

which will be used on the excursion. A one-off and short training session prior to the excursion or on the excursion is **not defined** as appropriate training. Appropriate training for specific excursions/programmes must be recorded in the risk assessment.

Latest advice from DofE:

### **Having sufficient fluids and topping up**

"Running out of fluids must be avoided on expeditions so take more than is likely to be needed and keep an eye on how much fluid the team has with them. As well as the water they carry, participants can get additional water as needed during their expedition. The best places are from their campsite, their Supervisor or other expedition staff. It is not recommended that participants take water from streams, as there is a high probability that it may be contaminated. Participants will need to boil the water or use some kind of filtration device/sterilisation process before they can drink or cook with it. This should only be needed on the most remote and high level of expeditions and should not be relied on as the team's water supply."

*"Every participant should set out each day with enough water to see them through that day; this means usually carrying at least two litres of water with them, more if it is a hot day. If necessary, this can then be topped up by supervisors, for example on very hot days or where teams are running late."*

p.123 of The DofE Expedition Guide, 13th Edition (2012)

**Note from the CEC Outdoor Learning Team:** DofE state that it is not recommended to take water from streams, although their next sentence provides advice on how to 'clean' this water. The minimum requirements in CEC's risk assessment have defined this advice for CEC establishments i.e. the use of fast flowing streams and **approved** water purification methods must only be used in the most remote areas.

Latest advice from the NHS:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/outdoor-health/bugs-and-germs/avoiding-bugs-and-germs-outdoors>

## **Drink clean water**

Germs, such as E. coli O157, Cryptosporidium and Leptospira can contaminate lochs, rivers and burns (streams) and can be harmful to people if swallowed. When setting out for the outdoors, make sure that you've enough drinking water with you. If this isn't possible, or if drinking water isn't available, untreated water can be made safe to drink by **boiling or using chemical treatments**. Water bottles, cups and flasks should be kept clean and away from dirt.

It's important to remember that some holiday accommodation in Scotland may not be on a mains water supply. These are also known as private water supplies which if not well managed and maintained can be a risk to health. The owner of the premises can provide you with more information about the quality of the drinking water. Further information can be found on the [Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland website](#).